

Rural Health Action Group (RHAG) Report

April 11, 2022

Liaison Councillor Sabine Dietz

Although the Action Group has had great success representing community needs and resources in collaborating with and contributing to an effective recruitment campaign, the Action Group continues to negotiate with the Horizon Health Network regarding the collaborative approaches needed for them to work with us on other priority issues. RHAG Co-Chair, John Higham, has been representing community interests on the development of a Charter and Steering Committee to define and oversee further collaborations, but there is nothing new to report here yet.

Progress on the five priority areas identified by the RHAG area:

1. Community Recruitment and Retention

- Microsite has been launched: <https://www.sackvillehealthcarejobs.ca>
- News coverage and excellent feedback
- Background information:
 - It's a collaboration between the RHAG, the Town of Sackville and Horizon;
 - With the support from community members/groups, neighbouring communities and Mount Allison University;
 - It was designed by HeyRebel Creative;
 - It provides an overview of life in Sackville (Tantramar region), and work at the Sackville Memorial Hospital. It also lists the job opportunities currently available at the hospital and provides a way to convert users;
 - It is ONE tool as part of our local recruitment strategy and it is designed to align with Horizon's national campaign and target audience;
 - It is not a campaign website with a short lifespan. It could be used for at least 3 to 5+ years to support recruitment activities;
 - The plan is to put dollars behind the promotion of the site and the jobs available at the hospital. Horizon will be using it in LinkedIn and as part of their digital campaign. It will also be used by HR when meeting candidates;
 - The website can be used to facilitate referrals from community members or SMH staff;
 - To note: 7 out of 10 RN positions in the ED are currently filled. In addition to 7-10 RN positions on the Brunswick inpatient unit.
 - The Horizon Health e-newsletter contained several stories about Sackville: "Horizon is pleased to confirm that nursing recruitment efforts at Horizon's Sackville Memorial Hospital (SMH) are yielding positive results, with several new staff members being added to the clinical team." "In recent weeks, Horizon has successfully recruited a nurse manager, two Registered Nurses (RNs), one Licenced Practical Nurse (LPN), and four Patient Care Attendants (PCAs) to the Brunswick inpatient unit at SMH, in addition to two RNs who will work in the hospital's Emergency Department (ED)." "Horizon recruitment teams are currently engaging in interviews with potential full-time and part-time candidates, while we anticipate the addition of another RN who recently completed the nursing bridging program for LPNs offered through the UNB."

- RHAG gathered Town, Community, and MTA swag items, and provided them to the Horizon recruiters attending a rural physician forum in Ottawa later this month. They also intend to offer the community recruitment micro site on a loop at the Horizon booth during the forum.
2. Community Fund & Incentives for Health Purposes
 - RHAG is still working on how fundraising and fund allocation could work, nothing new to report yet.
 3. Morale
 - RHAG members continue to meet with local Horizon staff, but have not done anything new since Valentines Day to raise spirits.
 4. Communications
 - RHAG is releasing general updates every few weeks, designed to both inform and challenge. They are posted on the Town website.
 5. Future Health Services Design
 - This very active committee is currently gathering and crunching data from a variety of sources, including the just-released Community Profiles from the New Brunswick Health Council. Thanks to the involvement of several retired health professionals on this committee, great work is getting done that is representative of community interests and needs. The goal is to come up with service provision that connects with the government's fall Healthcare Strategy, and responds to the emerging needs of a post-pandemic rural landscape, that will also be do-able for a 'build back better' healthcare system for Memramcook-Tantramar.